ALCOHOL MANDATORY TREATMENT SERVICE EVALUATION

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The Department of Health is evaluating the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment (AMT) Service to assess the health benefits to clients and their recovery from problem drinking. The evaluation will also:

- measure how the aims of the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Act have been met
- measure the cost effectiveness and efficiency of the AMT Service
- inform future enhancements to the service.

WHO IS DOING IT?

A competitive process was conducted with the Department of Health’s consultancy panel contract. Price Waterhouse Coopers Indigenous Consulting (PIC) Darwin, in partnership with Menzies School of Health Research has been selected to conduct the evaluation.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The project will commence in November 2015 and is expected to take approximately 15 months to complete.

WHO IS THE GOVERNING BODY?

An AMT Evaluation Steering Committee was established by the Department of Health to oversee the evaluation project.

Membership of the group is made up of suitably skilled external representatives including clinical, legal and the alcohol and other drug sector along with representatives from other government agencies involved in AMT services.

BACKGROUND

The Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Act (AMT Act) commenced in July 2013 to reduce alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.

It was developed as a harm reduction strategy and directs problem drinkers into treatment who are either unlikely or unable to voluntarily access treatment options.

The Northern Territory Government committed to undertake an evaluation of Alcohol Mandatory Treatment (AMT) services, following on from the review of the AMT legislation last year.

SCOPE

All AMT and associated services under the AMT Act are included in the scope for evaluation. This will include services provided under Community Treatment Orders including residential and non-residential services and services provided through after care plans.
EVALUATION FOCUS AND DESIGN

The focus on client outcomes will specifically relate to those expressed in section 3 of the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Act:

‘... to assist and protect from harm misusers of alcohol, and other persons, by providing for the mandatory assessment, treatment and management of those misusers with the aim of:

(a) Stabilising and improving their health;

(b) Improving their social functioning through appropriate therapeutic and other life and work skills interventions;

(c) Restoring their capacity to make decisions about their alcohol use and personal welfare; and

(d) Improving their access to ongoing treatment to reduce the risk of relapse.’

The project will study the group of clients who entered AMT from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 inclusive.

The study will look overall at client health, social functioning and alcohol dependence prior to treatment, during treatment and twelve months after release from their AMT Order. In addition, detailed case studies for a smaller group of clients will be prepared. This includes looking at the ‘client’s AMT journey’ and interviews with clients and their families to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of AMT.

PIC will also evaluate the AMT service model and how it has been implemented in each region. They will be consulting with service providers and stakeholders to identify the activities being provided and how they achieve the intended benefits for clients.

The cost effectiveness and efficiency of the services will also be studied across the regions and client groups.

The evaluation will be conducted in line with national ethical guidelines with client consents and under the approval from the Northern Territory Ethics Committees.

PIC will be supported by the Department of Health’s Office of Evaluation to deliver the project.

EVALUATION OUTCOME

The evaluation will provide the Department with a clear assessment of benefits to clients, actual services provided, cost effectiveness of the service in each region and recommendations to improve the service.

For further information about the evaluation project, please contact the Office of Evaluation on OfficeofEvaluation.DoH@nt.gov.au